

TOMB OF
DRACULA

MARVEL COMICS GROUP



25¢

33
JUNE
02143

THE TOMB



**BLOOD
ON MY
HANDS!**

**STOP HIM!
THE VAMPIRE
HAS CAPTURED
MY WIFE!**

**THIS IS IT!
THE
VAMPIRE-LORD'S
FIRST BATTLE
WITH HIS ARCH-FOE
QUINCY
HARKER!**



Hidden in the shadows where legend and reality merge, there are tales of a being who has lived more than five hundred years; they say he is a creature born not on earth, but in the deepest bowels of Hell itself; they say he thrives upon the blood of innocents, that he is the King of Darkness...the Prince of Evil and that even the bravest man quakes in fear at the merest mention of his name...

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

TOMB OF DRACULA!

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WRITER

GENE COLAN & TOM PALMER
ARTISTS

JOHN COSTANZA, letterer
TOM PALMER, colorist

LEN WEIN
EDITOR



BLOOD ON MY HANDS!

"I WATCH HIM DIE, YET I
FEEL NO JOY. I WATCH HIS
FLESH DECAY, HIS MAGGOT-
INFESTED BODY SHRIVEL.
I WATCH HIS BONES CRUMBLE,
HIS BLOOD FLAKE AND PEEL.

"I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT. ALL
MY LIFE, YET THERE IS NO HAPPINESS
NOW.

"FOR IF
DRACULA
PERISHES--
RACHEL VAN
HELSING
WILL DIE!

"AND, LORD-- CAN I
BRING MYSELF TO
SLAY HER AS WELL?

FREE OUR
MASTER,
OLD MAN. FREE
HIM OR THE
WOMAN IS
DOOMED!

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"WHAT **MUST** I DO? IT WOULD SEEM A DECISION EASY ENOUGH TO MAKE. SACRIFICE ONE LIFE TO DESTROY DEMON WHO HAS TAKEN SO MANY THOUSANDS OF LIVES.

"YET...YET THAT LIFE HAS A NAME... A FACE... A LAUGHTER ALL ITS OWN.

"BUT HOW MANY OTHER NAMES AND FACES AND JOYOUS RINGING LAUGHTERS HAVE CEASED TO BE BECAUSE OF THIS...THIS THING THAT DECAYS UPON MY FLOOR?

HOW MANY OTHERS WILL DIE IF I DO NOT DESTROY YOU FOREVER, DRACULA?

"THE COLD WINTER WIND RUSTLES THROUGH MY BEARD. I AM UNEASY...AND SO CONFUSED.

"ONE LIFE FOR MANY? SELFISHNESS OR HUMANITARIANISM? WHAT MUST I CHOOSE?

WHICHEVER CHOICE I MAKE WILL BE THE **WRONG** ONE. I AM SURE OF THAT.

BUT...CAN I PERMIT RACHEL'S DEATH? CAN I LET HER DIE AS EDITH DIED?

"EDITH... MY DAUGHTER MY BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER..."

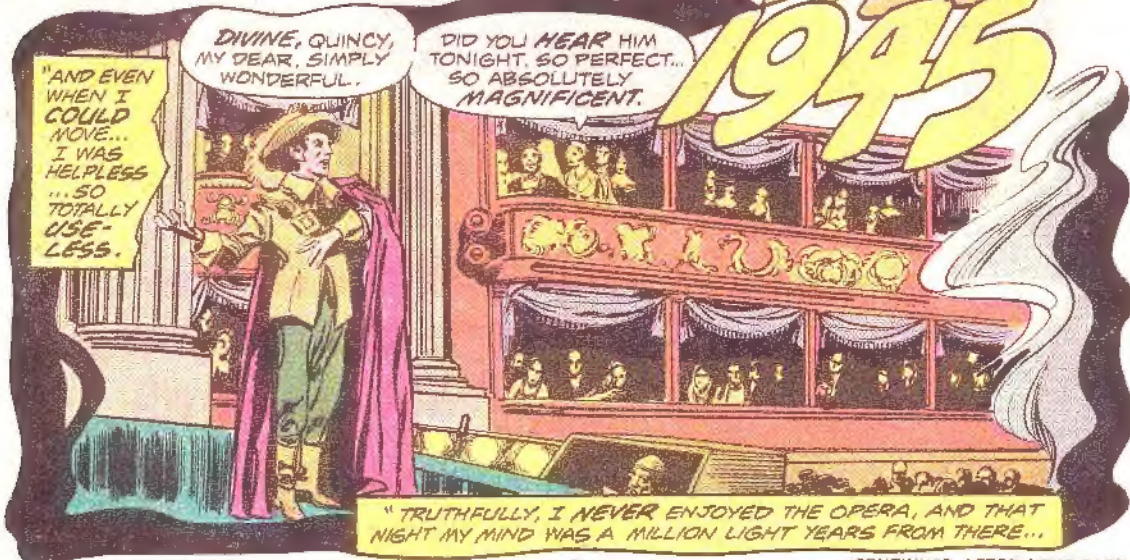
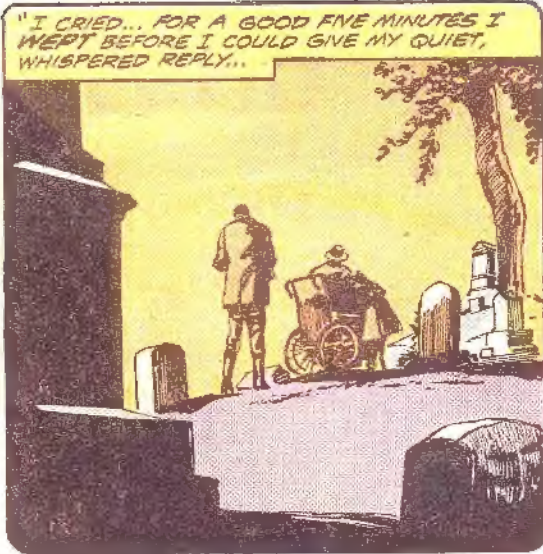
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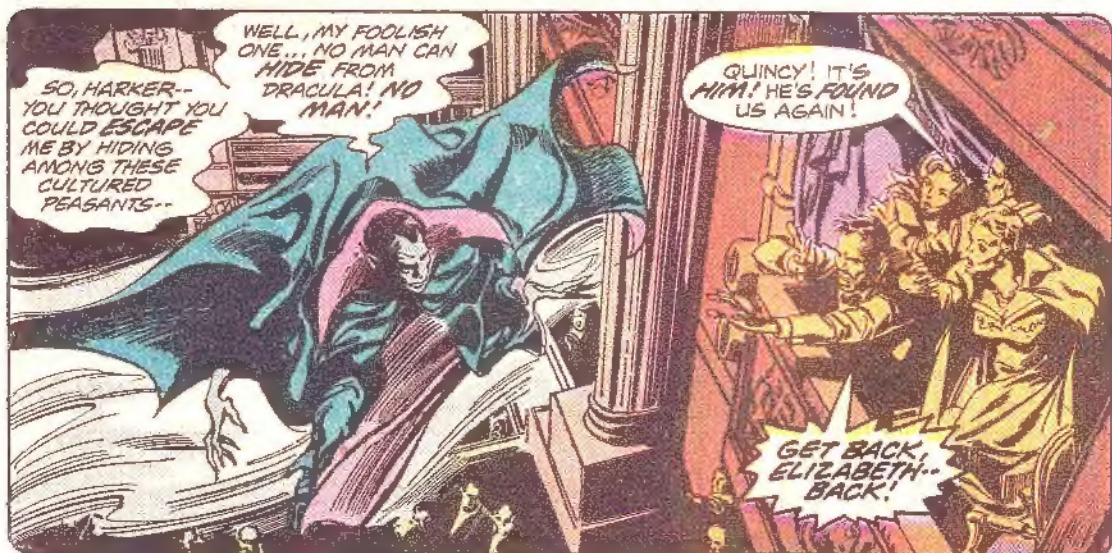
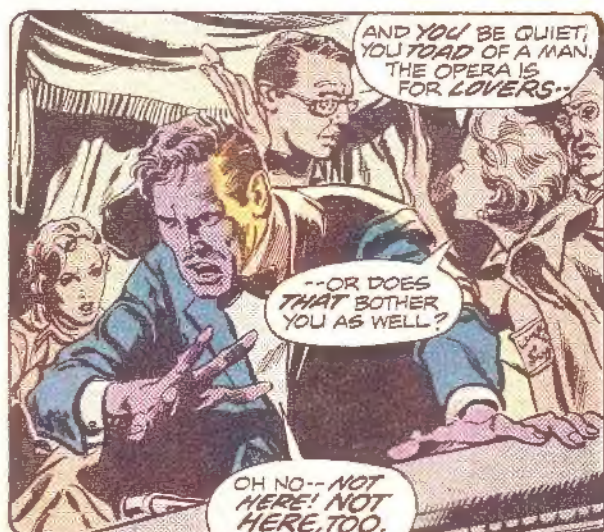
MY LOVELY WIFE, ELIZABETH. I WILL MISS YOU.


WHOEVER I WAS WITH YOU, I AM ONLY HALF THAT PERSON NOW... ONLY HALF

BUT REST EASY, DEAR ONE. REST EASY. FOR, EDITH WILL BE SAFE.

I PROMISE YOU THAT-- SHE WILL BE SAFE.








NO, YOU GET BACK, HARKER! I AM TIRED OF YOU AND YOUR WAYS. TIRED OF YOU HOUNDING ME, CHASING ME... SPENDING YOUR EVERY MOMENT TRYING TO SLAY ME.


I LEFT LONDON--TRAVELLED ACROSS THE WORLD--SOUGHT OTHER VICTIMS, YET ALWAYS I FOUND ONE OF YOUR AGENTS. ALWAYS ONE OF YOUR MEN PURSUING ME.

WHAT IS IT YOU WANT OF ME, HARKER? CAN'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE AS I HAVE TRIED TO LEAVE YOU?

BUT THIS IS NO TIME FOR ANSWERS. I HAVE MADE UP MY MIND. YOU SHALL DIE! AS LONG AS IT TAKES ME--YOU SHALL DIE!



"INSTINCTIVELY, I REACHED INTO MY SHIRT FOR THE SILVER CROSS. I KEPT CHAINED THERE."



AH, THE CROSS! THAT DAMNABLE TOTEM OF YOUR FALSE GOD.

PUT IT AWAY, HARKER-- TOSS IT INTO THE BUTTER WHERE IT BELONGS...

...OR, I SWEAR BY ALL THAT IS UNHOLY--I SHALL TAKE YOUR WIFE AND SLAY HER.

HELP ME, QUINCY, HELP ME!



TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HER, DRACULA.

BY GOD-- LEAVE HER ALONE--

--OR I'LL KILL YOU! I'LL KILL YOU!



KILL ME?
WITH YOUR
FRAIL HUMAN
HANDS.

I DOUBT
THAT, HARKER.
TRULY I
DOUBT THAT.

OBSERVE!

SQUIRM ALL
YOU WISH AS I
LIFT YOU TO
THE SKY.



BUT, MY OLD,
OLD FRIEND--YOU'LL
NOT SQUIRM MUCH
LONGER.

"MOCKINGLY, HE
HEAVED ME FROM
THE BOX SEAT--
TOSSED ME ASIDE
LIKE A PAPER
DOLL.

"BUT UNLIKE SUCH A
CHILD'S PLAYTHING,
MY BONES CRUSHED
AS I HIT THE STAGE
BELOW.

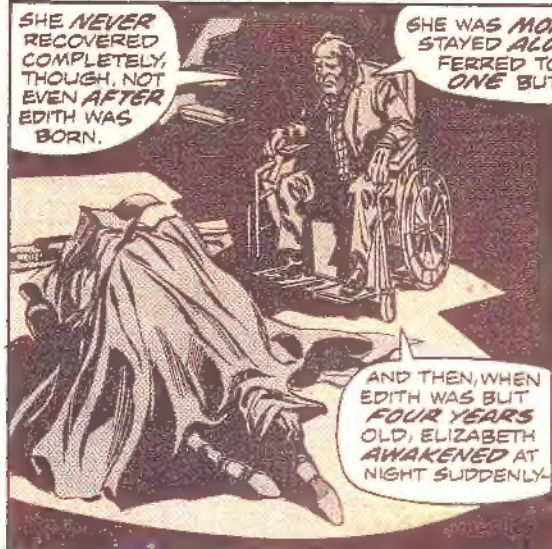
"MY LEGS WERE
USELESS AND PAIN OVERWHELM-
ED ME... AS
DRACULA HELD
MY DEAR UNCON-
SCIOUS WIFE IN
HIS BONY ARMS.

"AND AS I STRUGGLED IN VAIN
TO MOVE, HE LAUGHED...AND HIS
LAUGHTER DIDN'T FADE UNTIL HE
WAS LONG GONE.



IT TOOK TWO
DAYS FOR THE
POLICE TO
FIND ELIZABETH;
HER BLOOD
HALF-DRAIN-
ED AT THAT.

AND IT TOOK
FOUR MONTHS
OF CONSTANT
TRANSFUSIONS
TO BRING THE
ROSE BACK TO
HER CHEEKS.



SHE NEVER RECOVERED COMPLETELY, THOUGH, NOT EVEN AFTER EDITH WAS BORN.

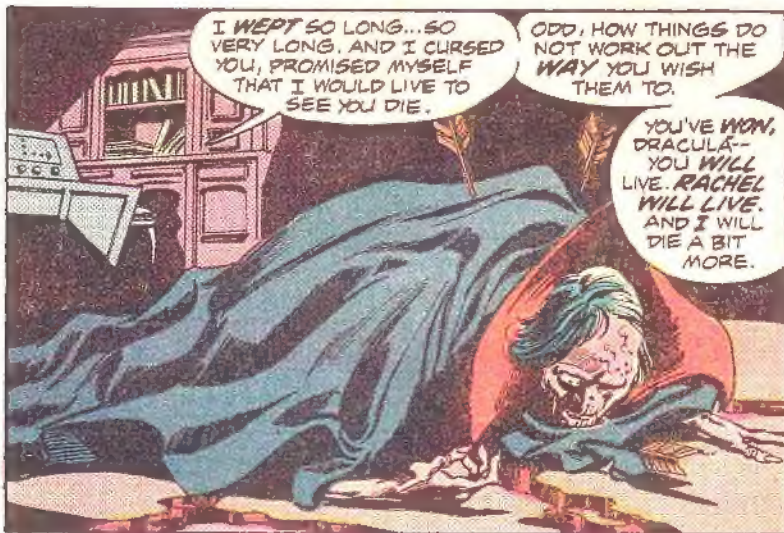
SHE WAS MOROSE... SHE STAYED ALONE, PREFERRED TO SEE NO ONE BUT MYSELF.

AND THEN, WHEN EDITH WAS BUT FOUR YEARS OLD, ELIZABETH AWAKENED AT NIGHT SUDDENLY.



-- SHE SCREAMED, BEGGING YOU NOT TO COME AT HER AGAIN.

THEN BEFORE I COULD STOP HER, SHE RAN INTO THE KITCHEN, AND WITH A SILVER-EDGED BUTCHER'S KNIFE, PUT AN END TO ALL HER FEARS.



I WEPT SO LONG...SO VERY LONG, AND I CURSED YOU, PROMISED MYSELF THAT I WOULD LIVE TO SEE YOU DIE.

ODD, HOW THINGS DO NOT WORK OUT THE WAY YOU WISH THEM TO.

YOU'VE WON, DRACULA-- YOU WILL LIVE. RACHEL WILL LIVE. AND I WILL DIE A BIT MORE.

I CAN NOT ALLOW ANOTHER WHOM I LOVE TO DIE AS ELIZABETH DIED, AS EDITH DIED.



I CAN NOT ALLOW IT, NO MATTER WHAT THE CONSEQUENCE.



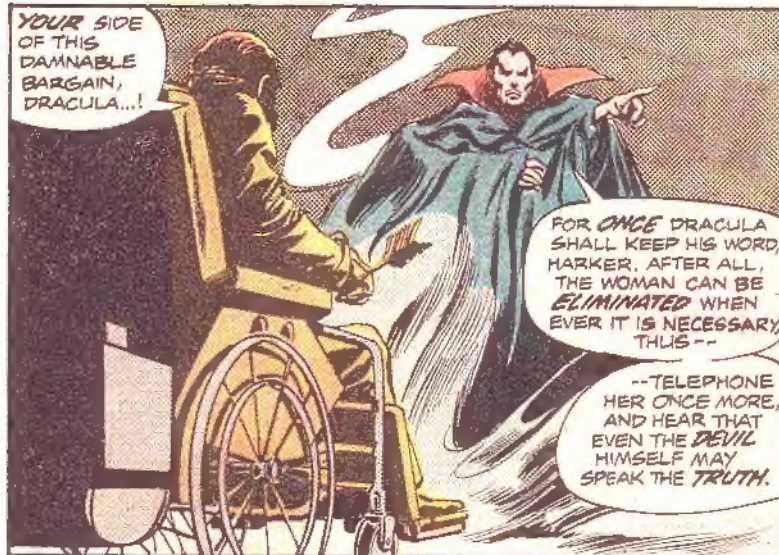
SO LAUGH AGAIN, DEMON-- YOU'VE HAD YOUR WAY ONCE MORE.



YOU'VE BROKEN ME AGAIN.



ENJOY THAT KNOWLEDGE, DEMON, ENJOY IT.



YOUR SIDE OF THIS DAMNABLE BARGAIN, DRACULA...!

FOR *ONCE* DRACULA SHALL KEEP HIS WORD, HARKER. AFTER ALL, THE WOMAN CAN BE *ELIMINATED* WHEN EVER IT IS NECESSARY, THIS --

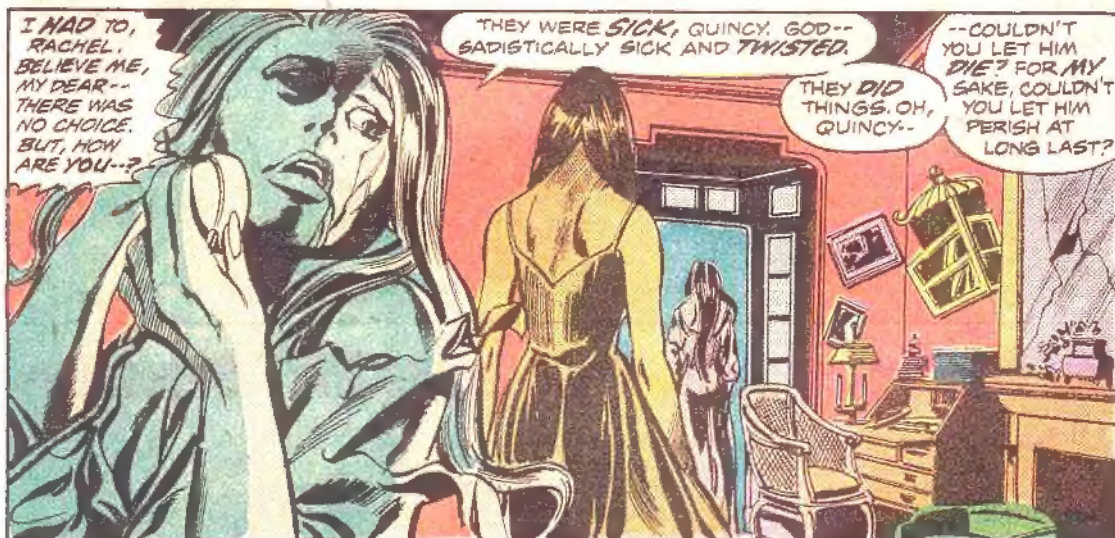
--TELEPHONE HER *ONCE* MORE, AND HEAR THAT EVEN THE *DEVIL* HIMSELF MAY SPEAK THE TRUTH.



"I SPEAK QUIETLY INTO THE MICROPHONE. MY VOICE QUIVERS HOPEFULLY, AGONIZINGLY, THEN--

RACHEL--?

OH GOD, QUINCY! WHY? WHY DID YOU LET HIM LIVE?

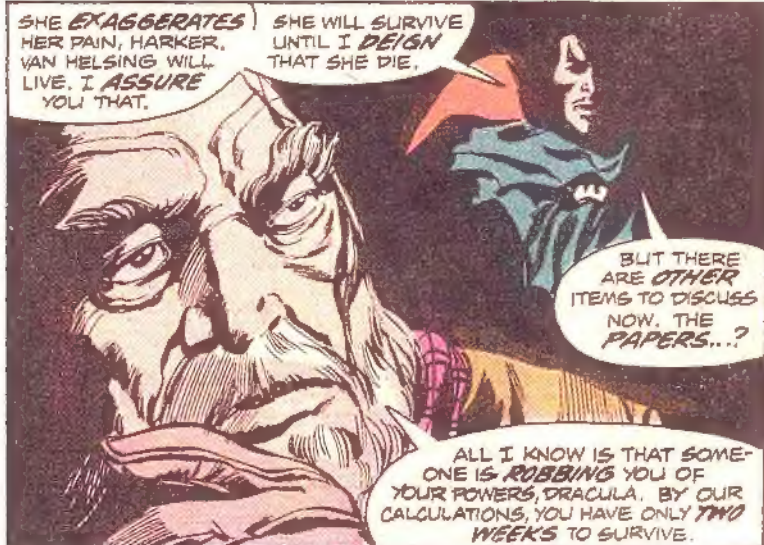


I HAD TO, RACHEL. BELIEVE ME, MY DEAR-- THERE WAS NO CHOICE. BUT, HOW ARE YOU--?

THEY WERE *SICK*, QUINCY. GOD-- SADISTICALLY SICK AND *TWISTED*.

THEY *DID* THINGS. OH, QUINCY--

--COULDN'T YOU LET HIM *DIE*? FOR MY SAKE, COULDN'T YOU LET HIM PERISH AT LONG LAST?

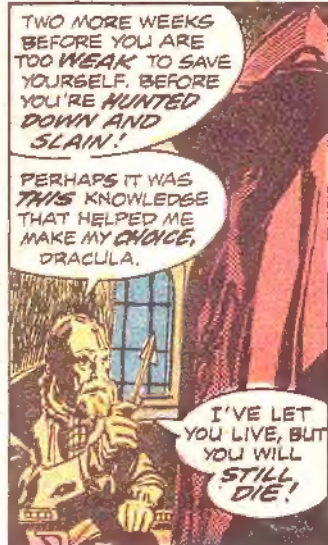


SHE *EXAGGERATES* HER PAIN, HARKER. VAN HELSING WILL LIVE. I *ASSURE* YOU THAT.

SHE WILL SURVIVE UNTIL I *DEIGN* THAT SHE DIE.

BUT THERE ARE *OTHER* ITEMS TO DISCUSS NOW. THE *PAPERS*...?

ALL I KNOW IS THAT SOMEONE IS *ROBBING* YOU OF YOUR POWERS, DRACULA. BY OUR CALCULATIONS, YOU HAVE ONLY *TWO* WEEKS TO SURVIVE.



TWO MORE WEEKS BEFORE YOU ARE TOO *WEAK* TO SAVE YOURSELF. BEFORE YOU'RE *HUNTED DOWN* AND *SLAIN*!

PERHAPS IT WAS *THIS* KNOWLEDGE THAT HELPED ME MAKE MY *CHOICE*, DRACULA.

I'VE LET YOU LIVE, BUT YOU WILL *STILL* DIE!

I SENSE YOU ARE TELLING ME THE **TRUTH** HARKER, AND IT IS **WELL** THAT YOU DO.

FOR, IF YOU HAD NOT, I WOULD **BREAK** OUR AGREEMENT THIS NIGHT, AND SLAY YOU **BOTH** WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION.



WE HAVE **KNOWN** EACH OTHER QUITE A **LONG** TIME, HAVE WE NOT, HARKER? MUCH LONGER THAN I'VE KNOWN ANY OF MY **OTHER** FOES, IN FACT, COUNT KORSACK, OR CAGLIOSTRO, PRINCE TAROT...

...OR EVEN THAT GERMAN MANIAC, LORD FYRE.



THEY ALL CAME TO ME, AND EVENTUALLY THEY **DIED** LIKE THE GUTTER SNIPES THEY WERE...

BUT LIVE ON, AND **THREE** WEEKS HENCE I SHALL RETURN, AND LAUGH, AND THEN **REND** THIS MANSION OF YOURS TO ITS BASE **FOUNDATIONS**.

WHAT A SHAME THAT WILL BE, IT'S TRULY AN **EXQUISITE** MANSE, MUCH LIKE THE ONE I INHABITED FOR AWHILE IN **FRANCE** DURING THE WINTER OF 1762 AND '63.

ONLY ITS FLOORS WERE **MARBLE**... RICH, **DARK** MARBLE.



BUT I'VE GROWN TO **ADMIRE** YOU, HARKER. I'VE ENJOYED OUR GAMES, OUR MATCHING OF WITS, OUR PLAYING THE **HUNTER** AND THE **HUNTED**.

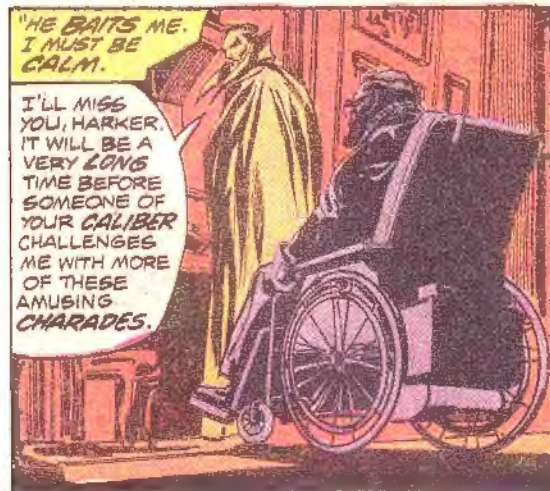
I **FEAR** THE GAMES WILL SOON **END**. I DARE SAY YOU HAVE **FEW** YEARS OF LIFE AHEAD OF YOU, EH?

I HAVE **ENOUGH**.



"HE **BAITS** ME. I MUST BE **CALM**."

I'LL MISS YOU, HARKER. IT WILL BE A VERY **LONG** TIME BEFORE SOMEONE OF YOUR **CALIBER** CHALLENGES ME WITH MORE OF THESE **AMUSING** CHARADES.

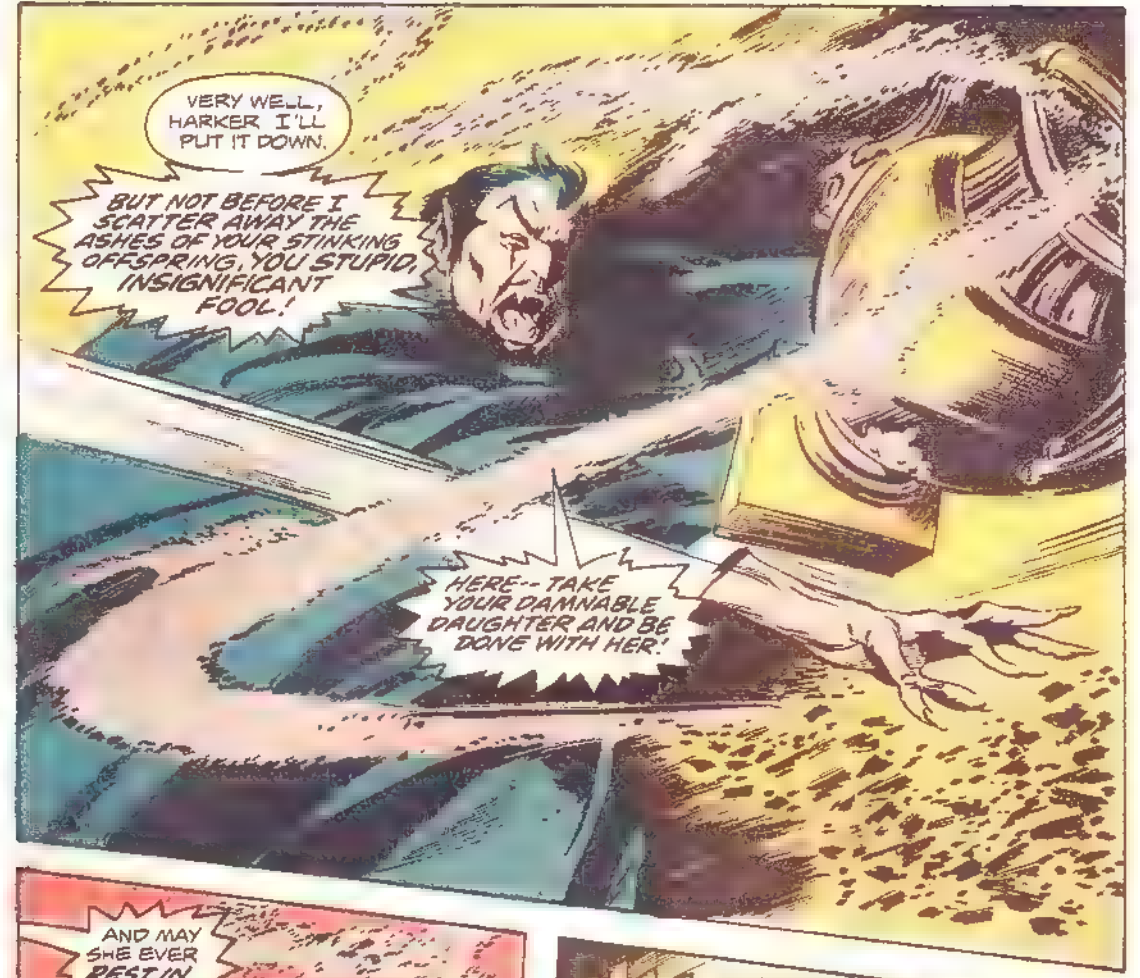


IN THE MEANTIME, I WILL HAVE TO PUT UP WITH SUCH UNCOOUTH **RABBLE** AS THAT BLACK PIG, BLADE, AND THE **OTHERS**.

AH, WHAT A LOVELY **URN**. WHEREVER DID YOU **FIND** THIS?

PUT THAT DOWN, DRACULA!

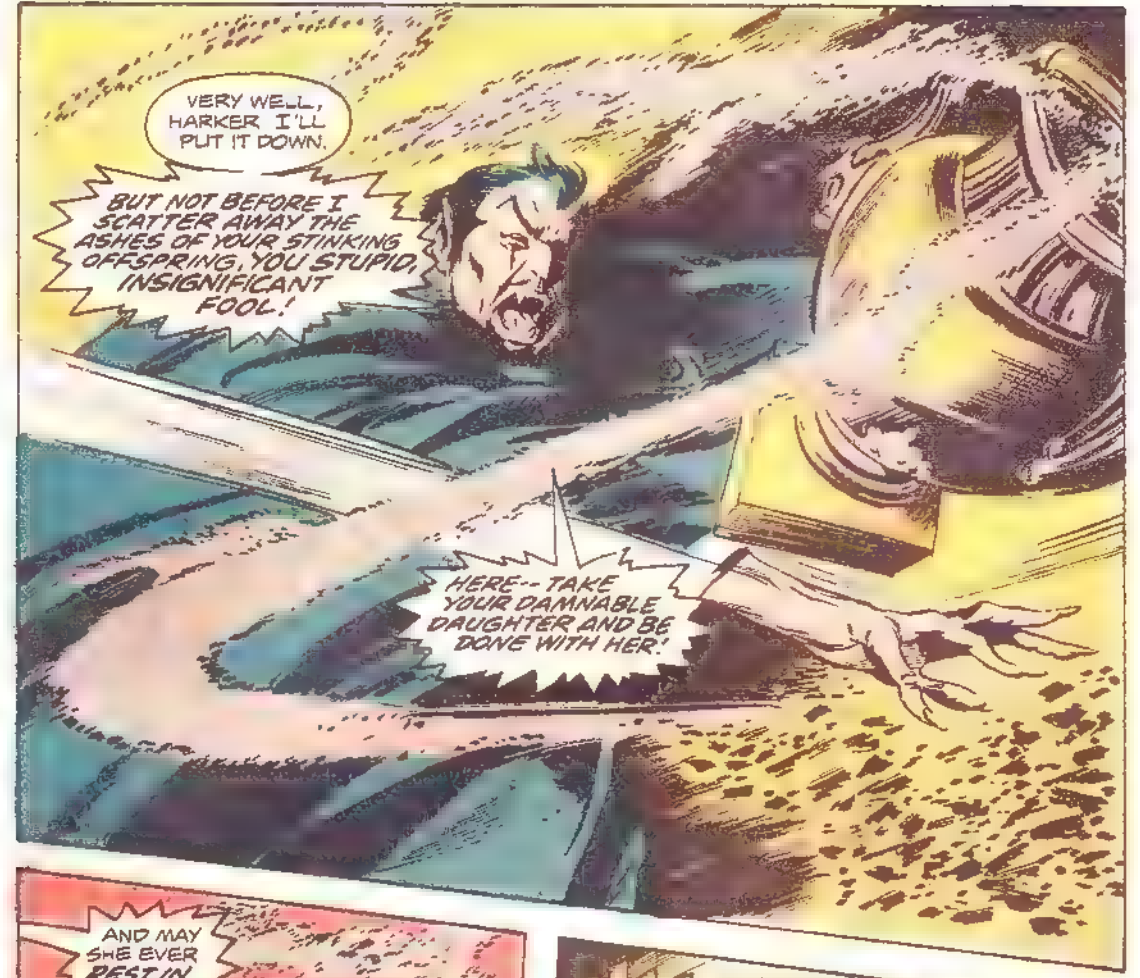




VERY WELL,
HARKER I'LL
PUT IT DOWN.

BUT NOT BEFORE I
SCATTER AWAY THE
ASHES OF YOUR STINKING
OFFSPRING, YOU STUPID,
INSIGNIFICANT
FOOL!

HERE-- TAKE
YOUR DAMNABLE
DAUGHTER AND BE
DONE WITH HER!



AND MAY
SHE EVER
REST IN
PEACE!

NO!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

HA!

SMASH!

NO!

GAMES!

INTERLUDE

JATPUR INDIA.
TAT NITAL IS QUIET
FAR BEYOND THE
SILENCE OF THE MUTE
HE IS HIS WIFE'S
CRIPPLED HIS SON IS
DEAD.

AND FIVE YEARS OF LIVING
IN HIS OWN SELF-CREATED
HELL ARE OVER.

THE INEVITABLE IS DONE,
AND DESPITE ALL THE TEARS
IN HIS HEART, HE IS RE-
LIEVED.

THERE'S NO
GUILT IN HIS RELIEF

HE HAS DONE ALL HE
COULD DO ALL THAT
COULD HAVE BEEN
DONE

I AM THE SAME AS
YOU MY HUSBAND. WE
BOTH MOURN FOR
OUR SON ADRI--

-- YET
THERE'S
SOMETHING
OTHER
THAN SADNESS
STIRRING IN
OUR SOULS

HE USED TO
CURSE AT
ME WHEN THE
SUN LOWERED
ITSELF EACH
NIGHT HE
KESSED THAT
HE WANTED
THE BLOOD
THAT A
VAMPIRE
NEEDED--

--NOT THE
BLOOD WHICH
WE PUMPED
INTO HIS
VEINS

IT'S FOR
THE BEST,
TAT. FOR
HIM FOR
ME FOR
YOU.

TAT DOESN'T SMILE IT IS HARD TO
BREAK FIVE YEARS OF SOLENNI-
NESS

BUT
INSIDE
INSIDE

END OF AN
INTERLUDE

YOU MAY SAY
THEY LIVED
HAPPILY
EVER AFTER

DARK EBONY SKIES SHUDDER IN SNOW-FLECKED FEAR AS CRIMSON SHARDS OF HELL-BORN FURY SHATTER THE COLD WINTRY NIGHT THAT CLINGS SO TIGHTLY TO CASTLE DRACULA.

CRUMBLING CONCRETE WALLS TREMBLE IN TERRIBLE ANTICIPATION OF THE HORROR WHICH EVEN NOW TRODS CLOSER... CLOSER...

DEATH RETURNS, AND WITH IT, THE MANSION DIES JUST A TINY BIT MORE.

THERE WERE OTHERS... THAT DETECTIVE HANNIBAL KING... MY OTHER AGENTS YES, MY **CONTROL** OF VAMPIRES FADED WHILE I WAS IN MOLDAVIA.

THEN, IN ENGLAND, I FIRST NOTICED MY **STRENGTH** DECREASE

THERE ARE **FACTS** WHICH ESCAPE ME I AM **SURE** OF THAT IT IS ALL THERE, BUT...

NO! I MUST NOT **RAMBLE** ON... I MUST **QUETLY RE-COUNT** ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED.

WHEN DID I **FIRST** NOTICE MY VAMPIRIC **POWERS FADING**...

DURING THAT BATTLE WITH GORNA[®] THAT NIGHT IN **MOLDAVIA**, I **ORDERED** THE VAMPIRE TO HEED MY WARNING YET I **DARED DEFEY** ME.

NEXT THERE WAS LORD HENRY... MY AGENT IN PARLIAMENT HE **FREED** HIMSELF OF MY HYPNOTIC COMMANDS

* * * TOP #23-LEN

SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO ME... SOMETHING WHICH IS **EATING** AWAY AT MY SOUL... EATING AWAY AT THE VERY **FABRIC** OF MY BEING.

AND TOMORROW NIGHT, WHEN THE MOON RISES ONCE MORE... WHEN **DARKNESS** AGAIN DRAPES THE LAND--

TOMORROW I SHALL LEARN MY **ENEMY'S NAME**-- AND AS I DO.

...LET NO MAN STAND IN MY PATH!

Comes to the Tomb!

96 MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

Dear Marv, Gene, Tom, and Roy,

Tomb of Dracula Issues #'s 26, 27, and 28 presented the most inventive and thrilling epic of this series yet. This saga, centered about the mysterious and intriguing Chimera, went beyond my furthest expectations of what this comic's creators have more than simply proven themselves capable of. The uncanny mystical aura that Marv, Gene, and Tom breathed into this tale, added to the searing emotion and nerve-riveting pacing they masterfully created, came together magnificently to forge a classic in the annals of great gothic horror stories.

If you had chosen to end the story line in three issues as planned, everything would have been just fine. Now I am thoroughly shocked and appalled after reading issue #29. I feel that something more perished with David Eshco and Sheila Whittier than merely their lives. You have taken from us the two human beings who for once had smeared Dracula in his own utter defeat. They triumphed by their wits and intellects, as beautifully depicted at the conclusion of issue #28. They struck the vampire where it hurt him the most, as had never been seriously accomplished before. Now however, they have been senselessly obliterated in a cheap, sensationalist trick.

How dare you be so callous and inhuman as to write in the murder and suicide of two of the most interesting characters yet to emerge from T.O.D. Granted, your efforts to portray Dracula's nightmarish evil have been extremely successful, but you have taken it outrageously too far this time. I thought the wave of murder at Marvel ended over a year ago as you had promised after Gwen's sad demise in Spider-Man. Apparently it hasn't.

Gentlemen, there was no earthly rhyme or reason for the printing of this hideous story. I believe you have a great deal of thinking to do about what you have done here.

When will the meaningless murders end?

Aaron Rothman
151-12 24th Road
Whitestone, N.Y. 11357

Al, we obviously have to disagree with you. Not because you are necessarily wrong, but because, extrapolating Dracula as we've presented him, he would *not* have let David or Sheila live.

The Chimera story was a three-parter. The story of David and Sheila was not. You are right; they did get back at Dracula. They made him lose. Therefore, true to his own ways, he had to seek revenge.

However, if you've read #30, you will note that he accomplished nothing by this. He won the battle and lost the war, because he was forced into doing something he didn't want to do because of foolish pride and such.

That the story bothered you is good. That is what Marv, Gene, Tom and John wanted.

Only one thing: it wasn't done in a sensationalistic manner. Our feeling was that it was grim, hardly blown larger than life.

Hopefully, after reading the past lines, you'll come to see it our way. If not, there's always next issue.



Marv & Gene & Tom & Co

This is only the third issue of this series that I have bought. Frankly I didn't think there was much that could be done with vampires that hadn't been done already.

Was I wrong?

First, want to say that Gene does an excellent job on this mag. His style is very realistic, which lends much credibility to this supernatural subject. Not to mention that he is just a darn good artist.

But my main comments are addressed to one Marv Wolfman.

Marv, you have impressed me. When David & Sheila waked out on Drac last issue, I figured that was that. I sure wasn't expecting two characters of long duration to die. How reverent!

Really, I thought you did an incredible story, the characters are *real*, genuinely human, acting & reacting in ways that made total sense.

Al too often a comic writer will bend the actions of the characters to fit some preordained plot or gimmick. This doesn't happen so much in Marvel comics happily. But this story was like a segment of actual life grafted onto paper.

In particular I was impressed by Drac's ravings & drives, the mature handling of David & Sheila's feelings, the even more mature developments with Taj & wife, the incredible tension of David's confrontation with Drac culminating in that sense-shattering panel on p. 26, the phenomenal interchange between Sheila & Drac & the unbelievable ending.

In others, everything was great! I have no doubt that this story will win you much recognition.

Christy Kanes
347 S. Westmore Ave.
L.A., Calif. 90020

We feel that the way Dracula is moving, the direction that he is now taking, that even this highly acclaimed story will soon be foreshadowed by greater things. Plans are currently being formulated for an entirely new direction for Dracula. One which we believe will come out of left field, yet you should all agree with (hopefully).

We have poured our hearts and souls into this book. And, ladies and gentlemen, we are incredibly pleased by your response.

Next: A special sort of guest star, and one we don't think *anyone* expects. Also: the explanation for things to come and things that already were.

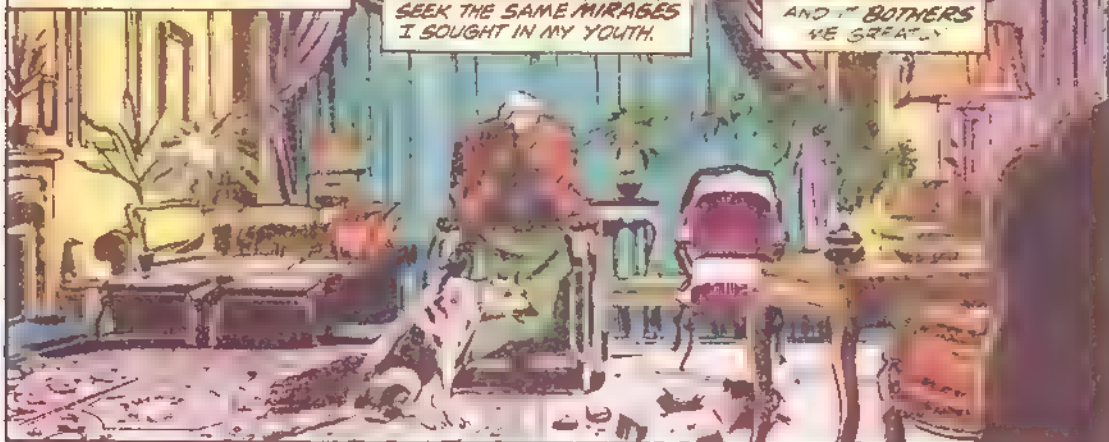
See you then, dear fans!

"I AM TIRED SO VERY TIRED,
AND SO VERY SICK I JUST
WISH TO STOP THE FIGHTING
THE BATTLING THE WAGING
OF THIS FRUITLESS WAR

IT NO LONGER MATTERS
IF I AM RIGHT OR WRONG
ONLY THAT MY LIFE HAS
GONE NOWHERE FOR I
SEEK THE SAME MIRAGES
I SOUGHT IN MY YOUTH.

I AM TIRED, AND WITH MY WEARI-
NESS COMES SELF-PITY I HAVE
NEVER KNOWN THAT BEFORE

AND IT BOTHERS
ME GREATLY



PERHAPS I HAS
ONLY STRUCK ME
NOW THAT EDITH
HAS BEEN DEAD
FOR OVER A YEAR
BUT I AM ALONE.
TRULY ALONE
FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN MY
LIFE.

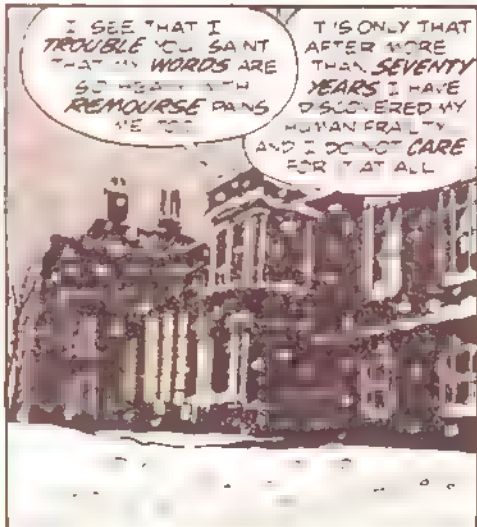
MY ACQUAINTANCES ARE EITHER
DEAD OR LONG GONE FROM MY
LIFE MY FRIENDS ARE SPREAD
ACROSS THE WORLD



I DO NOT THINK
I CAN LIVE WITH
LONELINESS.

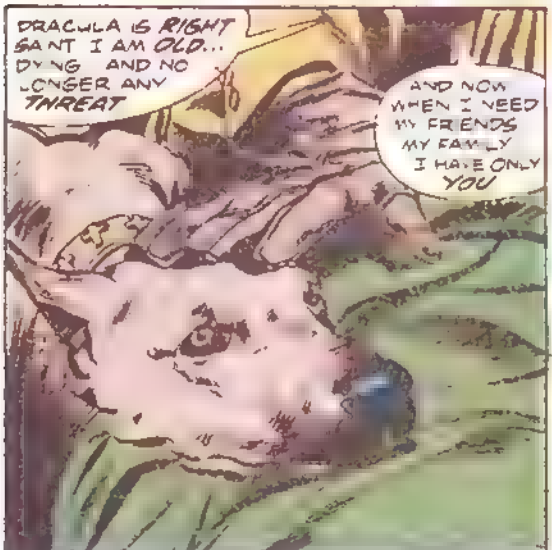
I SEE THAT I
TROUBLE YOU SANT
THAT MY WORDS ARE
SO HEAVY WITH
REMOURSE PANG
WE TOO

IT'S ONLY THAT
AFTER MORE
THAN SEVENTY
YEARS I HAVE
DISCOVERED MY
HUMAN FRALTY
AND I DO NOT CARE
FOR THAT AT ALL



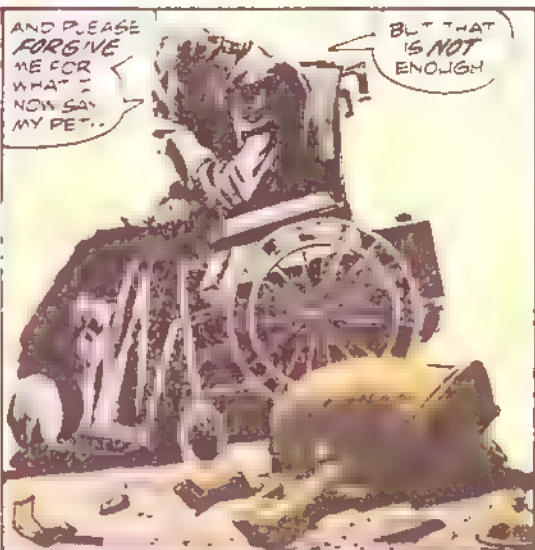
DRACULA IS RIGHT
SANT I AM OLD...
DYING AND NO
LONGER ANY
THREAT

AND NOW
WHEN I NEED
MY FRIENDS
MY FAMILY
I HAVE ONLY
YOU



AND PLEASE
FORGIVE
ME FOR
WHAT I
NOW SAY
MY PET..

BUT THAT
IS NOT
ENOUGH



THE NIGHT STOOD LONG FILLED WITH THE TROUBLED RESTLESSNESS OF ACHING BONES AND HEAVY THOUGHTS



THE NEXT MORNING SWANED FOR BUT IT'S GOING OFFERS LITTLE REVENGE

THE SMYTHE-JONES ACCOUNT IS CLOSED, TREMONT, TAKE CARE OF



MR. HARKER! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, HOW ARE YOU?

I AM WHAT MORE CAN I SAY MR. HARKER? 'S MR. PRESCOTT

NO OFFICE, SR

MORNING, QUINCY, I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR QUITE AWHILE-- NOT SINCE YOUR RETIREMENT PARTY, I BELIEVE

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?



NOT WELL, MR. PRESCOTT THERE HAVE BEEN MANY TUMULTUOUS CHANGES IN MY LIFE

FEW OF THEM FOR THE GOOD

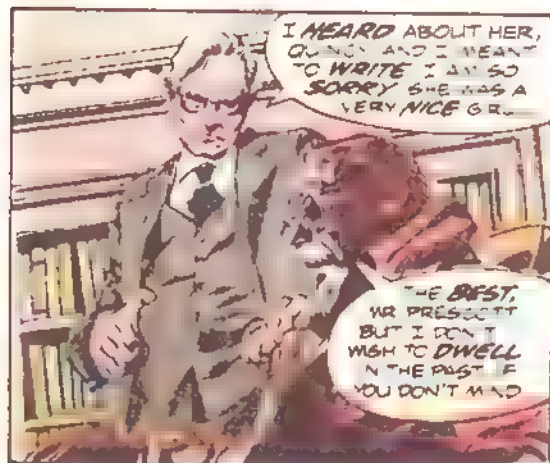
I HAVE COME TO GET MY PAPERS IN ORDER, AND TO CHANGE THE BENEFICIARY OF MY WILL

MY DAUGHTER DIED YOU KNOW AND I'VE BEEN SO BUSY



I HEARD ABOUT HER, QUINCY, AND I MEANT TO WRITE I AM SO SORRY SHE WAS A VERY NICE GIRL

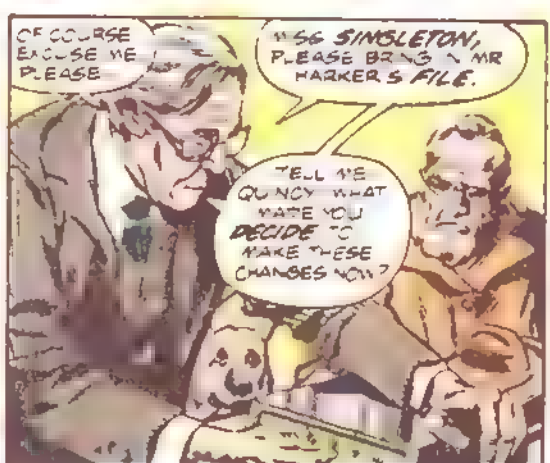
THE BEST, MR. PRESCOTT BUT I DON'T WISH TO DWELL IN THE PAST IF YOU DON'T MIND



OF COURSE EXCUSE ME PLEASE

MISS SIMPLETON, PLEASE BRING A MR. HARKER'S FILE.

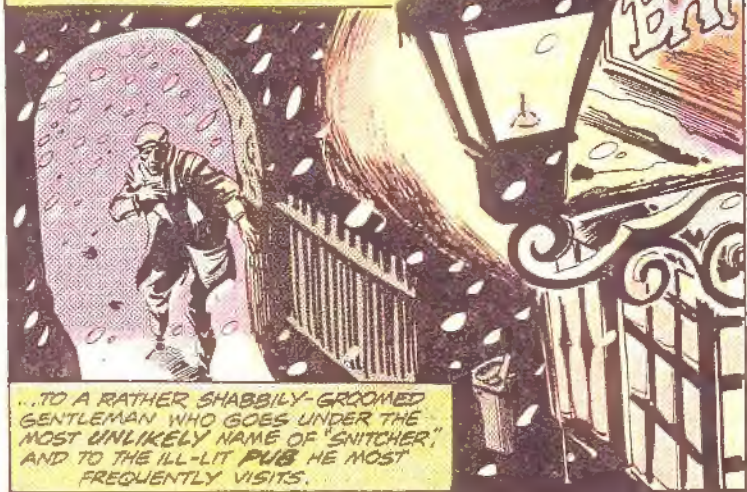
TELL ME QUINCY WHAT WERE YOU DECIDE TO MAKE THESE CHANGES NOW?



BECAUSE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FEAR I AM GOING TO DIE.

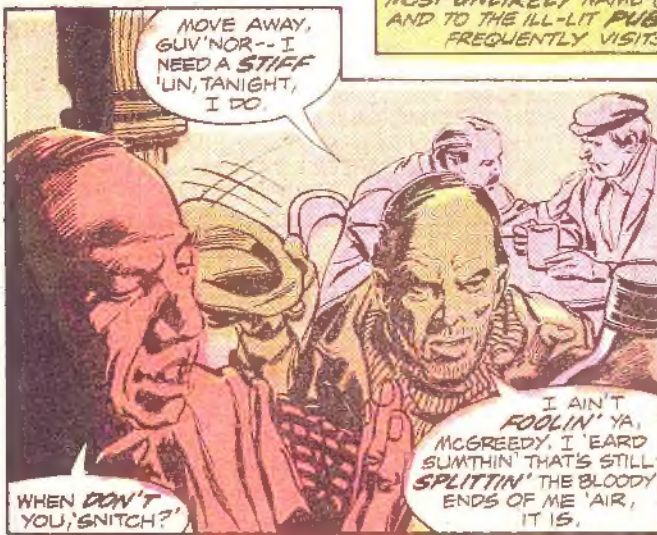


FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS THE LEARNED MEN PORE OVER PAPERS AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS. SO LET US SHIFT OUR TIME AND SCENE TO A PLACE OF SOMEWHAT GREATER INTEREST-- TO SOHO... THIS SELF-SAME EVE...



...TO A RATHER SHABBILY-GROOMED GENTLEMAN WHO GOES UNDER THE MOST UNLIKELY NAME OF 'SNITCHER', AND TO THE ILL-LIT PUB HE MOST FREQUENTLY VISITS.

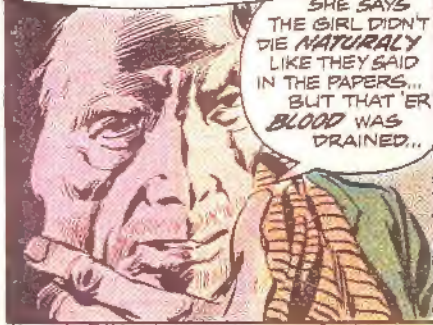
MOVE AWAY, GUV'NOR-- I NEED A STIFF 'UN, TONIGHT, I DO.



WHEN DON'T YOU, 'SNITCH?'

I AIN'T FOOLIN' YA, MCGREEDY. I 'EARD SUMTHIN' THAT'S STILL SPLITTIN' THE BLOODY ENDS OF ME 'AIR, IT IS.

Y'KNOW THE MISSUS IS FRIENDS WITH JOHNNY CLOVERTON'S MISSUS, AN' SHE'S THE HOUSEKEEP FOR LORD ARTHUR SINGLETON--THE BLOKE WHOSE DAUGHTER GOT DONE IN LAST NIGHT.



WELL SHE SAYS THE GIRL DIDN'T DIE NATURALLY LIKE THEY SAID IN THE PAPERS... BUT THAT 'ER BLOOD WAS DRAINED...

...AND THAT THE YARD 'SPECTS THAT VAMPIRES CAUSED THE WHOLE MESS.



OKAY, 'SNITCH, I THINK YER HAD ENUFF.

WHEN Y' START TALKIN' 'BOUT THINGS LIKE THAT, I AIN'T INTERESTED NO MORE.

TAKE YER NIGHT-MARES ELSEWHERE TONIGHT. NO ONE 'ERE CARES A WHIT



WRONG! THERE IS ONE WHO MOST CERTAINLY DOES CARE...

...SO MUCH SO THAT HE SILENTLY FOLLOWS THE WANDERING PATH THAT 'SNITCHER' TAKES.





AND, WHEN THE TWO ARE TOTALLY ALONE, HE SPEAKS... QUIETLY, AND WITH THE TRACE OF A FOREIGN ACCENT THAT DEFIES ANY EASY DESCRIPTION HERE.

MAN! I HEARD YOU IN THE PUB, I WISH TO SPEAK WITH YOU OF THIS... VAMPIRE. EH?



YOU BELIEVED ME?

YES. I BELIEVE YOU. I HAVE EXPERIENCE IN THESE, EH, MATTERS.



YOU DO? LOR!! I'VE BEEN WANTIN' T' SPEAK T' SOMEONE... TELL 'IM WHAT I 'EARD.

VAMPIRES ARE TRYIN' T' TAKE OVER THE WHOLE PARLIAMENT... COMMONS... LORDS... THE WHOLE BLOODY THING.

WE GOTTA STOP 'EM.



NOT "WE," MORTAL. NEVER "WE."

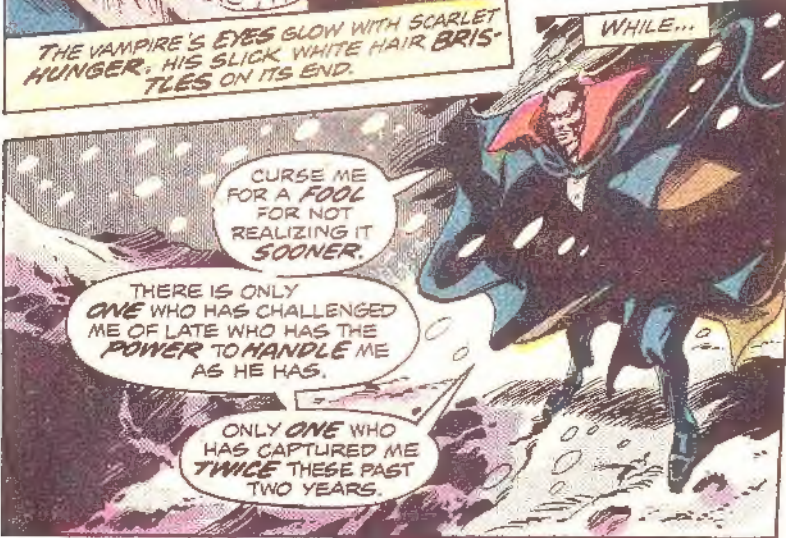
THE VAMPIRE'S EYES GLOW WITH SCARLET HUNGER. HIS SLICK WHITE HAIR BRISTLES ON ITS END.



AND WHEN HE CAN NO LONGER STAND TO STARE AT THE PITIFUL EXCUSE FOR A HUMAN BEING BEFORE HIM... HE LUNGES...

... AND QUICKLY, SIMPLY, BUT NOT AT ALL CLEANLY, HE SLAYS HIM.

SECONDS LATER, FRESH SNOW COVERS THE CRIMSON STAINS SMEARED UPON THE GROUND.



WHILE...

CURSE ME FOR A FOOL FOR NOT REALIZING IT SOONER.

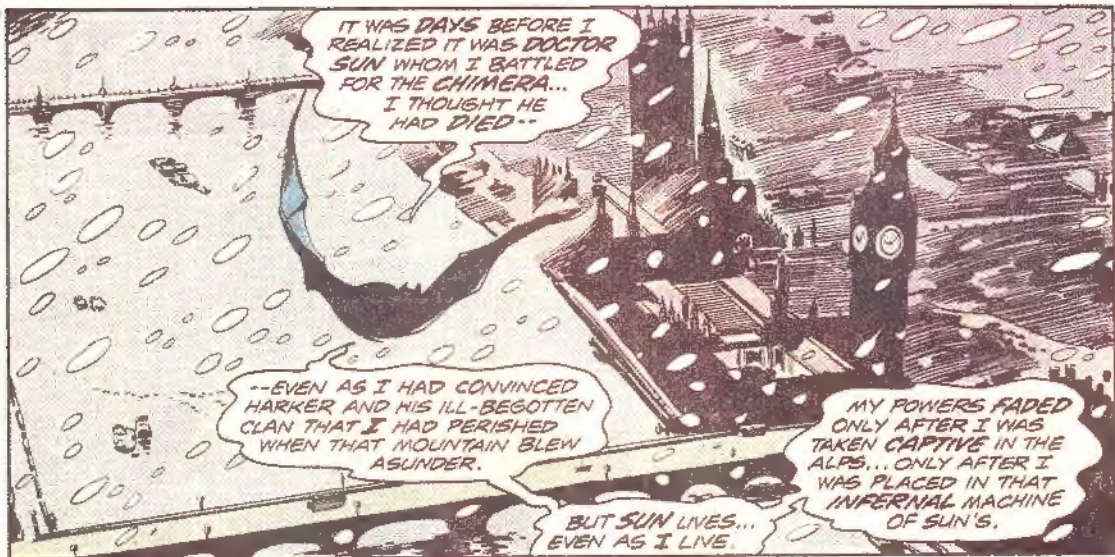
THERE IS ONLY ONE WHO HAS CHALLENGED ME OF LATE WHO HAS THE POWER TO HANDLE ME AS HE HAS.

ONLY ONE WHO HAS CAPTURED ME TWICE THESE PAST TWO YEARS.



DOCTOR SUN HAS RETURNED.

AND THIS TIME HE SEEKS MY EVERLASTING DEATH!



IT WAS DAYS BEFORE I
REALIZED IT WAS DOCTOR
SUN WHOM I BATTLED
FOR THE CHIMERA...
I THOUGHT HE
HAD DIED--

--EVEN AS I HAD CONVINCED
HARKER AND HIS ILL-BEGOTTEN
CLAN THAT I HAD PERISHED
WHEN THAT MOUNTAIN BLEW
ASUNDER.

BUT SUN LIVES...
EVEN AS I LIVE.

MY POWERS FADED
ONLY AFTER I WAS
TAKEN CAPTIVE IN THE
ALPS... ONLY AFTER I
WAS PLACED IN THAT
INFERNAL MACHINE
OF SUN'S.

I WAS STRAPPED TO ONE SIDE--
THAT VAMPIRE, BRAND--WHOM SUN
HAD CHOSEN TO BECOME THE NEW
VAMPIRE LORD, WAS ON THE OTHER.
SUN STATIONED HIMSELF
BETWEEN US.

EH--?

HE SAID HE
WAS TRANS-
FERING MY
MEMORIES TO
BRAND... I DID
NOT KNOW
HE WAS ALSO
TRANSFERING
MY POWERS TO
HIMSELF!

TOD #21, --LW.



INSPECTOR CHELM--
AY THINK YER BIRD'S
COMIN' YORE WAY.
HEADIN' SOUTH NOW.



THANK YOU,
BISCOMBE.
I'LL TAKE
OVER.

BUT YOU
RADIO THE
YARD--UPDATE
THEM.

I WANT MORE
MEN STATIONED
HERE STRAIGHT-
AWAY.



UNDERSTAND?

YES,
INSPECTOR.



DOCTOR SUN SHALL BE DEALT WITH-- BUT FIRST I WANT THAT REPORT ON ME... I WISH TO READ IT ALL.

AND MY FINAL STOOGES... THE ONLY ONE I DID NOT SEND AFTER LORD SINGLETON-- SHALL GET THOSE DOCUMENTS FOR ME.



BENNINGTON! YOUR MASTER CALLS.

YOU ARE MINE... DO AS I COMMAND.



GO SECRETLY TO SINGLETON'S OFFICE. GO WITH A WEAPON. YOU SHALL HAVE NEED OF IT.



YOUR MISSION IS VITAL TO ME. IT MUST SUCCEED.

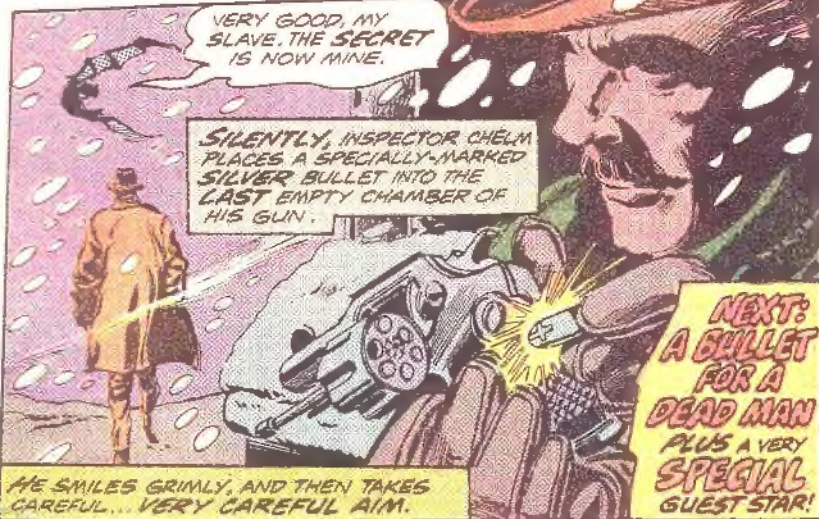
SIR, THIS OFFICE IS OFF LIMITS. SORRY, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO LEA-



OPEN THE SAFE, BENNINGTON. FIND THE PAPERS I NEED.



FIND THEM AND BRING THEM TO ME.



VERY GOOD, MY SLAVE. THE SECRET IS NOW MINE.

SILENTLY, INSPECTOR CHELM PLACES A SPECIALLY-MARKED SILVER BULLET INTO THE LAST EMPTY CHAMBER OF HIS GUN.

NEXT: A BULLET FOR A DEAD MAN PLUS A VERY SPECIAL GUEST STAR!

HE SMILES GRIMLY, AND THEN TAKES CAREFUL... VERY CAREFUL AIM.